# Phase I SMP Updates: Inventory and Assessment

A key step in updating a Shoreline Master Program (SMP) is to gather an adequate base of information to make reasoned decisions. Below are recommended steps for:

- An **inventory** of shoreline conditions including land use, public access, and environmentally sensitive areas
- A **map portfolio** of these data layers displayed at the appropriate scale; and
- An **analysis report** that analyzes the information and data collected as it relates to development of an effective Shoreline Master Program.

The analysis and associated maps will serve as the basis of information for development of SMP policies, regulations and environment designations in subsequent phases. Because the "end users" are the public and elected officials, we suggest incorporating public involvement from the beginning. We also include recommendations for keeping Ecology engaged in the process throughout.

## Task 1: Coordinate with Ecology and state agencies

To help ensure project results are consistent with the state Shoreline Management Act, and other applicable laws and regulations, local governments should coordinate with Department of Ecology, and other state agencies, such as the Office of Community Development, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Aquatic Resources Division. Ecology will provide technical assistance on data sources and approaches and will evaluate consistency of products with the Shoreline Management Act and applicable guidelines.

***Recommendation:*** *Build in opportunities for technical review of draft products for each task as described below.*

## Task 2: Secure qualified consultant services *(if applicable)*

Many local governments contract consultants to conduct inventories and prepare assessment reports. After preparing a detailed scope of work, prepare and publish a *Request For Proposals,* and select the most qualified applicants with the help of a review committee.

***Recommendation:*** *Provide opportunity for Ecology to review the draft scope of work for consultant services and include Ecology on review committee.*

## Task 3: Establish and conduct participation process

Local governments must inform and involve the public in updating the shoreline master program throughout the multiphase update effort consistent with the Shoreline Management Act *(see RCW 90.58.130).*

***Recommendation:*** *Prepare a public participation plan that identifies specific objectives, key parties (Planning Commission, public, property owners, state agencies, County, Tribes, neighboring jurisdictions, etc.), and establishes timelines for public participation activities.*

## Task 4: Inventory and map shoreline conditions

An inventory begins with careful compilation and evaluation of all pertinent and available data, reports, information, aerial photos, plans, studies, inventories, and other information applicable to the jurisdiction's shorelines.

Create a **working map portfolio** that allows mapped information to be overlain for the analysis tasks. Available data must be sorted by scale. For example, information indicating vicinity such as watershed boundaries, urban growth area, should be displayed at a larger scale. Parcel data, and individual habitat features are more appropriately displayed at a reach scale, other data such as shoreline jurisdiction, wetlands, and public access sites may require presentation at both scales. Much information is available in digitally mapped form, other maps may need to be created from information extracted from reports, photos or hard copy maps.

Ecology's draft shoreline guidelines require that at a minimum, and to the extent such information is relevant and reasonably available, local governments collect the following information:

- Shoreline and adjacent **land use** patterns and transportation and utility facilities, including the extent of existing structures, impervious surfaces, vegetation and shoreline modifications in shoreline jurisdiction.
- **Critical areas**, including wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife conservation areas, geologically hazardous areas, frequently flooded areas, and shorelines of statewide significance.
- Degraded areas and sites with potential for ecological **restoration**.
- **Areas of special interest**, such as priority habitats, rapidly developing waterfronts, previously identified toxic or hazardous material clean-up sites, or eroding shorelines.
- Existing and potential shoreline **public access sites**, including public rights-of-way and utility corridors. The inventory will include descriptions of recorded public access easements, their prescribed use, maintenance and terms.
- General location of **channel migration zones and floodplains.**
- Historical aerial photographs documenting past conditions to assist in preparing an analysis of **cumulative impacts** of development.
- **Archaeological or historic resources** in shoreline jurisdiction
- Conditions and **regulations in shoreland and adjacent areas** that affect shorelines, such as surface water management and land use regulations.

**NOTE:** Proceed carefully before pursuing new data gathering efforts! In most cases, field work should be limited to field verification of existing data.

***Recommendation:*** *Consult Ecology's Web site for data sources.* ***Submit digital copies of working map portfolio*** *to Ecology before preparing an analysis report.*

## Task 5: Prepare analysis report

Prepare a report that analyzes the information and data collected above as it relates to development of an effective Shoreline Master Program. The report should describe the primary driving processes that influence the physical and biological conditions that affect the jurisdiction, and then present more detailed analysis for specific shoreline reaches. The report should present findings and recommendations in a way that is useful for making planning decisions, such as assigning environment designations. For example, the information on shoreline reaches should identify opportunities and constraints in: 1) improving environmental protection and restoring the environment where processes have been impaired, 2) addressing the special requirements of shorelines of statewide significance 3) providing public access, and 4) accommodating appropriate water-oriented uses. The report should identify data gaps, focusing on information that would be useful to support plan development or implementation.

The analysis shall include at a minimum, the following tasks:

### 5.1: Analyze ecosystem processes and shoreline functions

Describe the primary driving processes that influence the physical and biological conditions that affect the jurisdiction (e.g., the climatic and geologic setting, hydrologic, sediment and nutrient transport systems). Then develop a more detailed analysis of ecological functions for specific shoreline reaches.

### 5.2: Analyze shorelines of statewide significance.

Identify the location and extent of shorelines of statewide significance within their jurisdiction, and describe their unique attributes and importance for environmental protection, public access, and economic use.

### 5.3: Analyze public access.

Identify public access needs and opportunities within the jurisdiction and explore actions to enhance shoreline recreation facilities. For shorelines of statewide significance, public access and recreation analysis shall include demand projections that take into account the activities of state agencies and the interests of the citizens of the state to visit public shorelines with special scenic qualities or cultural or recreational opportunities.

### 5.4: Analyze shoreline use

Conduct an analysis to estimate the future demand for shoreline space and potential use conflicts. Characterize current shoreline use patterns and projected trends to ensure appropriate uses consistent with the SMA.

### 5.5: Create presentation Map Portfolio

Prepare maps at appropriate viewing scales that illustrate findings of the analysis report. The user will be introduced to the area with coarser resolution vicinity maps indicating jurisdictional boundaries, watershed boundaries and the City's shorelines under SMA jurisdiction. Maps at the shoreline management segment scale should indicate applicable inventory features such as known presence of listed species, critical riparian or aquatic vegetation, with existing land uses and shoreline modifications clearly indicated. The portfolio should include a comprehensive map of existing shoreline public access sites. **Potential areas for restoration and/or protection, public access, and shoreline use, should be indicated** and described in the accompanying text.

**NOTE**: All maps should include appropriate cartographic conventions such as legends, scale indications, a North arrow, and a title.

***Recommendations**: Consult Ecology's web site for examples of assessments local governments have prepared following this structure. Provide opportunities for review and comment of draft shoreline analysis report with specific recommendations and accompanying presentation map portfolio.*